

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1 - 8 of the International Application and replace them with new claims 9 - 23. The status of the claims after amendment will be as follows:

Claims 1 - 8 (canceled)

9. (new) A soldering method comprising:  
preparing a solder bath containing an oxidation suppressing element;  
performing soldering of a plurality of members in the solder bath; and  
replenishing the solder bath as the soldering proceeds with a replenishment solder alloy having a higher concentration of the oxidation suppressing element than does the solder bath.

10. (new) A method as claimed in claim 9 wherein the replenishment solder alloy has the same chemical composition as the solder bath except for the content of the oxidation suppressing element.

11. (new) A method as claimed in claim 9 wherein the solder bath contains copper, and the replenishment solder alloy has the same chemical composition as the solder bath except for the content of the oxidation suppressing element and copper.

12. (new) A soldering method as claimed in claim 9, wherein the concentration of the oxidation suppressing element in the replenishment solder alloy is 2 to 6 times a target concentration of the oxidation suppressing element in the solder bath.

13. (new) A soldering method as claimed in claim 12 wherein the solder bath has the target concentration of the oxidation suppressing element prior to soldering.

14. (new) A soldering method as claimed in claim 9 wherein performing soldering comprises performing flow soldering.

15. (new) A soldering method as claimed in claim 9 wherein performing soldering comprises performing wave soldering.

16. (new) A soldering method as claimed in claim 9 wherein the oxidation suppressing element is selected from P, Ge, Ga, and Ce.

17. (new) A soldering method as claimed in claim 9 wherein the solder bath and the replenishment solder alloy each comprise Sn, Ag, and P, and the replenishment solder alloy contains 60 - 100 ppm by mass of P.

18. (new) A soldering method as claimed in claim 17 wherein the solder bath further comprises Cu.

19. (new) A soldering method as claimed in claim 9 wherein the replenishment solder alloy comprises, in mass %, Ag: 2.5 - 3.5%, Cu: 0.2 - 0.9%, 60 - 100 ppm by mass of P, and a remainder of Sn.

20. (new) A soldering method as claimed in claim 9 including replenishing the solder bath with the replenishment solder alloy at a rate such that the oxidation suppressing element is supplied to the solder bath by the replenishment solder alloy at no less than the rate at which the oxidation suppressing element in the solder bath is consumed by the soldering.

21. (new) A solder alloy for replenishing a solder bath comprising Sn, Ag, and 60 - 100 ppm by mass of P.

22. (new) A solder alloy as claimed in claim 21 further comprising Cu.

23. (new) A solder alloy as claimed in claim 21 comprising, in mass %, Ag: 2.5 - 3.5%, Cu: 0.2 - 0.9%, 60 - 100 ppm by mass of P, and a remainder of Sn.